



*Education Edge*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 7, 2001    CONTACT:    Nikki Horner  
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NASHVILLE – State government officials participated in the fourth annual Education Edge Job Shadowing Day today, hosting students from across the state as they learned firsthand about career options in government.

“There are student skills required for today’s job market that were not required 10 years ago,” Commissioner of Education Vernon Coffey said. “Job shadowing experiences also help students realize the value of education in today’s workplace.”

Job Shadowing Day is part of Education Edge’s goal to educate the youth of Tennessee while preparing them for successful careers in tomorrow’s workforce. The program is a joint effort with the departments of Labor and Workforce Development, Education, Economic and Community Development, and the Tennessee Board of Regents.

“This is an excellent opportunity for students to learn what is involved with different jobs throughout state government,” Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development Michael E. Magill said. “Students really see the day-to-day responsibilities of a job and what skills are needed.”

Gov. Don Sundquist, who declared February 7 as “Job Shadowing Day” for state government officials in Tennessee, also had a student accompany him through a busy day of work. Students from across the state got the opportunity to shadow the state’s chief executive by entering an essay contest on why they would like to shadow the governor.

This year's essay contest winner was Ashley Carver, a junior at Munford High School. She participates in the Tipton County Education Edge Partnership, which offers career awareness in the school system.

"It was truly an honor to shadow Governor Sundquist," Carver said. "I have been interested in several of the governor's initiatives over the years. Through job shadowing, I got to see firsthand how several programs started and where they are today. It was a great hands-on experience."

Carver and approximately 40 other students shadowed government leaders in Nashville. In addition to Commissioners Magill and Coffey, Commissioners Natasha Metcalfe of Human Services and Alex Fischer of Economic and Community Development also participated in the event.

House Speaker Jimmy Naifeh, Senate Republican Leader Ben Atchley, Senate Education Chair Randy McNally, and House Education Chair Les Wunningham were among the 36 state senators and state representatives who sponsored students for Job Shadowing Day.

Businesses across the state sponsored approximately 22,000 job shadows last Friday on Groundhog Day, while it is estimated that more than one million students participated nationally. In 1999, more than 16,000 students visited 7,300 of Tennessee's businesses, and last year 20,000 students shadowed employees from more than 7,500 businesses.

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